Jim Harrington's Moment of Terror

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By L. T. MEADE

When Widow Conway died she left her diamond ring in Thomas Harrington's charge.

"You're to give it to my daughter Lois on her wedding day," she said. "It's about the most precious thing in all the world to me. I got it from a gipsy to whom I was kind, and she said that a charm went with it, and luck goes with it, but Lois is not to have it until she marries, and then you'll give it to her faithful and true, Thomas Harrington."

"I will," answered Harrington. "I will do all you require."

And in consequence of this promise the widow died in peace, and Thomas himself took the little ring from the place where she had told him and conveyed it to his own house.

Harrington was a linen draper in apparently good business. He had a large shop in the center of the little town, and his one son Jim was the pride of his life. On the night the widow died he put the ring carefully away, and in his heart he made a sort of vow that he would be faithful to the dead woman, and give the ring to her daughter on the morning she was a bride.

Lois was a very pretty, slender, fair-haired girl. She had a well-arched instep and a neat, erect carriage. Her eyes were of a deep and tender blue. Her lips were sensitive, and her golden hair fluffy and abundant. Her mother had apprenticed her to a dressmaker, and after Mrs. Conway died Lois started a little business on her own account. She had neat taste and clever fingers—she could cut patterns of the most elaborate nature, and fit bodices to perfection. As her prices were moderate and her manners gentle and unassuming she soon made a nice little connection for herself, and was able, as the neighbors said, to pay her way. She herself was the perfection of neatness and dainty clothing, and on Sundays, when she walked in the direction of the village church, it was a sight worth looking at to see her and Jim Harrington side by side.

Jim was tall and broad and dark, and Lois was fair as fair could be, and the neighbors said that they were prudent young folk, and had no intention of marrying until they could both afford it. About a year after her mother's death, however, Jim thought that the time had come when he might ask his father to take him into partnership, and bring Lois back to the old house beside the big shop as his pretty bride. But Jim had never heard of the diamond ring. One Sunday evening Jim spoke all his heart to the young girl.

"I want you to marry me by Christmas," he said. "I want us to have a joyful and delightful time when the snow covers the ground, and when other people are more or less grumpy and discontented. I'll take you to London for your wedding trip, Lois, and show you some of the wonders of the big world."

Lois promised faithfully to do everything that Jim required of her, and with a heart on fire with love and hope and happiness the young man sought his father.

"I'm a happy man to-night, dad."

"Eh! What!" cried old Harrington. He had been half asleep, but he roused himself now and peered with his deep-set eyes at the lad.

"What's up, boy? What's up?" he said again.

"You must have known for a long time that I loved Lois Conway," was Jim's next remark.

"Eh, eh, not that girl, surely not that girl," said old Harrington again.

"And why not?" answered Jim.

Then his eyes flashed and angry color mounted into his cheeks, and he said with resolution:

"I've loved her for years. She has promised to-night to be my wife. I want to marry her this side of Christmas and to bring her home to you. She'll make a light in the old place, father—she'll brighten us up considerably, I guess. We must smarten the house for her, too, but that we can talk over another time. What I want to say now is that it is arranged, father, and I want you to give me proper deeds of partnership, so that I may take my right footing as a married man in my own father's house."

Jim paused. Old Harrington had tottered slowly to his feet.

"And you think," he said, "and you think to turn me out and take the business and bring the girl here. You think that I'll—that I'll submit, you do, do you?"

"Why, father, what ails you?" cried Jim.

"It's not to be," said Harrington, "that's all; that is my final word."

"Very well," answered Jim, "I won't force a girl I love into a house where she is not welcome, but I'll take her away with me to London and get a place somewhere as a clerk. There is my Uncle Henry Chapman; he'll help me to find an opening, and I know the business well. But, all the same, what does this mean, father. I've been a very good and faithful son to you up to my twenty-fifth birthday. What ails you, old man?"

Harrington uttered a groan.

"There's nothing for it," he said. "I must out with the truth. There ain't no business for you to come into. It is mortgaged up to the hilt. Now you know. Don't worry me any more to-night."

He stumbled out of the room, slamming the door behind him.

Jim Harrington stared straight before him. The room was dark, but he seemed to see into all the corners—there was a memory more or less vivid in every part of the old room. His mother had died when he was ten years old. She was a fair-haired woman, with a look of Lois about her. He remembered how she sat beside a bright lamp, and how the light from the lamp fell upon her face, and how he used to worship it and think of her as a sort of angel—then she died, and with her died the brightness, and the angelic atmosphere left the house. But still his father had been good to him. He was a somewhat stern, but a very upright man, and Jim had reverenced him, and although he had wished more than once that he had been taken more fully into the old man's confidence, yet he believed in him. He had always imagined that his father was putting by money, and that the shop meant a tidy business and a thriving concern.

Now, like a flash, the truth was revealed to him. But the memories still came out of the corners of the old room and pressed around him. Lois had sometimes been here. She had played with him as a little child, and even then he had made up his mind to marry her, and on Christmas days the room had rung with laughter and mirth, and the holly and mistletoe had adorned it. Times and again he himself had brought his troubles here and solved his own difficulties, but, oh, what was the use of thinking of the 'past now? He stood up and stretched himself. He would go to Lois and tell her the truth. They could not marry at Christmas, that was certain. They must wait for perhaps a year. She would be sorry and he would feel somewhat broken-hearted, but he would not let a blow of this kind utterly crush him. He would get his poor old father to tell him everything, all the truth, and then he would go to Lois and tell her that he must find his uncle in London and get a berth there, and make a home for her far away from her native village.

With this intention in his head he passed from the room into the shop just beyond. The shop was empty, as, of course, it would be on this Sunday evening. He opened the door on the further side of the shop which led direct upstairs to his father's bedroom. Jim himself slept in the house proper, but Harrington for years and years had taken a fancy to guard the shop, as he expressed it.

Jim went upstairs. He had taken off his boots, and his steps made no sound. He knocked at the door of his father's room, but there was no answer. He heard some rustling inside, however, and he entered. The sight which met his eyes astonished him very much. The old man was seated at a table in the middle of the room. On the table was a lantern which threw an intense light on his face and figure. All the rest of the room was in complete darkness. Jim looked straight at the figure bending over something which he held in a trembling hand. Certain words fell on Jim's ears.

"I'll break my promise to the dead. I'll sell the ring. I showed it to a Jew merchant once, and he said it was worth—God in heaven, what is that!"

The old man dropped the ring and turned. Just at that moment Jim laid a hand on his shoulder. Harrington did not recognize him. The intense light had blinded his eyes.

"Thief, scoundrel," he cried, "but you shan't rob me. Get out of this, I say, or I'll kill you."

Jim was about to speak, but Harrington was strong in his excitement. Before the young man could utter a word, his father had flung himself upon him, and his thin fingers were dug deeply into Jim's throat. He choked and reeled and tried to save himself without further hurting his father. Old Harrington continued to mutter furious words, and pushed his son toward the door. Then something seemed to snap in Jim's head. For an instant he forgot all but the dear desire of life itself. He flung the old man roughly from him, and Harrington fell with violence against the iron knob of the bedstead.

He fell with a groan. He lay perfectly still, and two or three drops of blood oozed from his lips. Jim bent over him in terror.

"What have I done!" he muttered to himself.

He unfastened his father's waistcoat and laid his hand against his heart. He could not hear it beating. Then, snatching up the lantern, he looked into the half-opened eyes—they were glazed, with no look of recognition in them.

"He is dead," thought the son.

Like a man in a dream he rushed away to get brandy. He found a little in the cupboard of the sitting room and brought it back with him. The face of the old man wore a blue, sunken look now, and Jim noticed that there was a dark blue mark on the temple.

"I've killed him," said Jim to himself.

He scarcely knew the meaning of his own words, but he knew that his heart was thumping horribly and that there was a curious lightness in his brain; that mad Fear seemed to have come into the room and was sitting down in front of him and gibbering at him.

"I've killed him," he said again. "I didn't mean to do it, but I have done it, and for the first time in my life I am afraid, horribly. I'll have to fly; I cannot face it. I have done it—I, who never harmed a fly before."

The whole expression of his face had altered. There was a craven look of fear round his lips and in his black eyes. Suddenly he caught sight of the diamond on the table. It sparkled—it seemd to send a living flame. He rose to his feet, touched it and laid it down again. Then going up to the old man and suppressing a visible shudder, he lifted him from where he lay on the floor and laid him on the bed. He straightened his limbs and put back his hair and wiped the blood from his lips, and then he bent and touched his forehead with his lips.

"Good-bye," he said. "I've killed you, but only in self-defense; all the same the horror of it is driving me mad."

He went out of the room and downstairs. He had examined the contents of his pockets. He had a little money, but not much; still he had enough to take him to London. He would go to London at once and hide there. It was hard to find people in such a crowded place as that.

It was now quite late—past 10 o'clock. The streets in the little town were nearly empty, but a few girls and young men were still lingering here and there, whispering and talking and laughing and courting. Jim was conscious of a slight shudder as he passed him. He went in the direction of Lois Conway's cottage. He did not mean to speak to her again, but he thought he would like to see her. A man who saw him pass exclaimed:

"There goes Harrington. He is so much in love with Lois Conway that he does not know the very ground he walks on. Hullo, Jim!" he shouted, "Hullo!"

Jim took no notice, but walked on a little faster. The man nodded to the girl, whom he had kissed a moment before, and they laughed and chuckled together.

Jim reached the cottage. He was glad to see a light in the window. It was the window of Lois's sitting room. He went and stood outside and watched for her. He watched behind a shrub, and she could not see him. He noted the contour of her pretty head and the look of intense happiness in her eyes. She was reading her Bible. Presently she shut it up, and her blue eyes were raised as though in thankfulness to heaven, and then she put out the lamp and went upstairs.

Jim now watched the light in her little bedroom. It did not burn for long. In five minutes the tiny cottage was in absolute darkness. The young and happy girl was asleep.

"God bless you, Lois. Good-bye," said Jim, and he strode away through the darkness.

He knew that a train passed the junction about twelve miles away between 2 and 3 in the morning. He reached the junction and took a ticket for London. He could not make any further plans. As he sat in the railway carriage, which happened to be crowded, he wondered what had come to him. He was like a man dazed and in a dream.

In the morning Lois Conway awoke. She wondered why she felt so glad. Then she remembered. She was to marry Jim in a month—how delightful! Why had God given her such happiness? But as she dressed she was vaguely troubled. She was not a superstitious girl; she was quite healthy-minded; she did not know why this sense of glooin was on her.

At breakfast, however, she understood. A neighbor burst into the little cottage.

"Why, Lois," he said, "a dreadful thing has happened. Jim Harrington has gone away, and there are marks of a terrible struggle between him and his father, and they say the old man—"

"Why what!" said Lois, and she rushed forward and caught the neighbor by both her hands.

"He's very bad. He's not dead, but he's ill, and the doctor is with him, and he is giving the strangest evidence, but for his evidence no one would have thought that Jim had done it."

"If you say a word against Jim I'll turn you out of the house," said Lois.

"What spirit you show!" cried the girl, with a mixture of admiration and anger. "But there is no good in your trying to keep up your pecker now. Your sweetheart is gone, and the police are after him. The old man when he came to himself told a strange tale. He said that Jim crept up after him to his bedroom and tried to kill him because of a ring which he guarded—a diamond ring."

"A diamond ring!" cried Lois. "Do you mean my ring?"

"Not likely," cried the girl. "Your ring indeed."

"Well, never mind; tell me the rest."

"He said he didn't recognize Jim, and that Jim came up and wrestled with him, and before he knew where he was Jim had flung him away and knocked him against the bedstead, and he was stunned and he thought he was dead. When he came to himself he knew that it was his son who had struggled with him, and he said they had been quarreling over a matter, but would not say what. In short, there's not the least doubt Jim Harrington of all people in the world has tried to kill his own father. There's a warrant out against him for murderous assault, and he has gone; he has left the place."

"I must understand about this," said Lois.

She found herself quite strong and not dreadfully puzzled. She knew why she had felt depressed. She knew also what she had got to do.

She went straight to the shop and upstairs to the room where the old man was lying bandaged and very weak and ill, with a nurse from the hospital sitting by him. He had regained consciousness, however, and when he saw Lois he spoke to her.

"You're the girl that wants to come here and ruin everything. Jim and I had a quarrel last night, and it was on account of you. He tried to kill me, yes, he did. There's your ring on the table, but you shan't ever marry now; you shan't ever have it."

Lois walked quietly to the table where the ring lay. She took it up, looked at it and laid it down again. She had understood when her mother died that Thomas Harrington was to take care of the diamond ring for her, but of late years she had forgotten all about it. She went downstairs. In the hall she met the doctor.

"Is Mr. Harrington mad?" she asked.

"Why do you ask?" was his response.

"Because he says such queer things of his son. No man, no father in his sober sense, would speak as he does."

"He is excited," said the doctor. "He has had a terrible blow and a narrow escape of his life. We must be very careful of him. When this cerebral excitement goes off he'll be, you may be sure, his old self again. It is a sad pity that Jim Harrington has run away."

"I'm going to find him," said Lois. "I'm going immediately."

The doctor left the house, and Lois stood quite still to consider. She was always a matter-of-fact and sensible girl. She had never felt more sensible than she did at this moment. It seemed to her that her brain possessed double its natural power. She glanced at the eight-day clock in the corner of the shop, and then turned and went upstairs to old Harrington's room.

"I want you to leave me for a moment with Mr. Harrington," she said to the nurse. There was something quite commanding in her tone; she looked taller, too, than her wont. The nurse got up in spite of herself and went softly away.

"He is quieter now—don't excite him, whatever you do," she whispered to the girl, and she closed the door behind her.

Lois went straight to the bed. She bent down and touched the old man with one of her hands. Her blue eyes were very bright—her golden hair very golden—Harrington had sunk into a doze. He opened his eyes with a start, and when he saw Lois he exclaimed:

"Why, Mary! Mary! what are you here for?"

Lois knew at once what he meant—he mistook her for his wife for so many long years.

"I've come to tell you something, Thomas Harrington," was Lois's steady response. "Your son is innocent of any intention to hurt you. I'm going to bring him back. When he comes back you must unsay that wicked story of yours. You must tell the truth, old man; you must tell the truth."

She glided from the room when she had uttered these words, and old Harrington followed her figure to the door, with terrified eyes.

"I'm lost," he murmured to himself when she had vanished. "It's Mary come back. She always idolized Jim. She has come to reproach me. I meant to sell the diamond ring, true enough, true enough, but I'll repent. I'll do anything on earth to prevent Mary haunting me."

The nurse came and stood by the old man's side. He looked at her and moved restlessly.

"I'm beginning to think that I fell by accident,' he said. "I'm beginning to think that Jim was not to blame. I wish I could see my own son Jim; I'd give anything on earth to see him."

Meanwhile Lois went to the railway station. She took a ticket for London. Still that wonderful strength, that wonderful courage, that brain power remained with her. She felt certain that Jim had gone to London. She knew all his history. She knew about all his hopes. She was acquainted with his plans, his desires. She even knew about his relations. She knew something else also. Jim, from his childhood, had been subject to strange attacks, to curious delusions, which never in the least amounted to insanity, but which followed him and dogged him and forced him to submit to their influence.

"He's under a delusion now," thought the girl. "He would never hurt his father. That I don't for a moment believe; but if I don't find him and tell him that the old man is alive and likely to recover he may really go mad. I'll go first of all to his cousin, Mr. Chapman; he has a tailor's shop in the Borough Road."

Lois had never been in London before, but that fact did not daunt her in the least. She got there in good time. A friendly porter was willing to listen to her tale.

"I want to find a man who came to London in a hurry this morning," she said.

"By what train?" asked the porter eagerly.

Lois mentioned the proper train.

"What was he like?" asked the porter next.

Lois described him.

"I saw him," was the man's next exclamation. "You always spot a countryman, and he came up and asked me a question. Dark and big, wern't he, and with a kind of trouble in his face?"

Lois answered in the affirmative.

He asked me to give him a certain direction."

"Where, where?" asked the girl eagerly.

"To Borough Road. I told him he had best go by underground to Charing Cross, and then—"

"I know where he is," said Lois, in excitement. "Get me a cab at once; I'll drive there."

The porter obeyed her. He put her into a four-wheeler, gave the driver the direction, and she started on her journey.

She arrived at Mr. Chapman's house when the family was sitting down to their substantial tea.

She entered and went straight up to Mr. Chapman himself.

"Has Jim Harrington been here?" she asked.

Her words startled the worthy tailor.

"Who are you?" he asked in his astonishment. "I never saw any one so like——"

"So like—what do you mean?"

"So like my poor sister Mary Chapman. She who married Harrington's father."

"I was told that already to-day," said Lois. "Has Jim been here?"

"He has, poor fellow. He looked very strange."

"Where is he now?"

"He is coming back this evening. He may be in any moment. He said he wanted me to help him, but when I offered him a post in the shop he shook his head. Why, that's his step."

"It is all right," said Lois, cheerfully. "I'm engaged to marry him. He went away from home under a mistake. Let me see him somewhere alone."

"You can go into the wife's little parlor," was Chapman's response.

He led the way, and Lois entered a small and chilly room. The next instant the door was opened by Jim himself. Chapman had told him to go in. He had said nothing about Lois.

When the young man saw the very blue eyes and the golden hair and the sweet face of the girl he loved, he uttered a cry, clasped his hands together and said with a groan:

"Oh, why have you come? Why do you torture me?"

"Because I have good news for you, darling," said the girl. "Your father never died, the doctors think he will recover, and you must come home at once."

"I thought I had killed him," he said in a low, hoarse whisper. "I was haunted by the terror of it. I should soon have gone mad."

"But you never did it, Jim; you never, never did it," said Lois, her eyes kindling with a strange mixture of anxiety and relief.

"I gave him a pretty fierce blow, little girl. He mistook me for a burglar, and had his knuckle into my windpipe. When a man is choking he is apt to get confused. I lost my head somehow and I did it. Afterwards I took fright. I never knew anything like it, and made off. I was mad to go."

"Well, you can come back now," said Lois. "It is the only thing to be done. You must come back this very night."

Jim went. That night he found himself standing by old Harrington's bedside. He bent over him, and in a few words told the old man the truth. Harrington gazed queerly at him, and then he burst into a laugh.

"I mistook you for a burglar, Jim, old boy!" he said.

"Ay, that you did, father, and you almost settled me."

"I didn't know I was so strong," said Harrington, and he chuckled with a curious kind of joy.

But the next day Jim had to appear before the magistrate, only for mere form, however, for Harrington's altered position and Lois's words soon put matters straight.

The pair were married within the year after all, for Harrington's brother-in-law in London helped him to bide over his worst financial distresses, and Lois wore the diamond ring on her finger.

OUT OF THE ORDINARY.

In the south of China silk worms have been reared and silk manufactured for over 3,000 years.

Only one man in 100 in the labor unions of the country is reported unemployed by union officials.

Noah Webster, from first to last, spent seventeen years on his "Dictionary of the English Language."

Publication of New York city salary list showed that salaries had increased $500,000 in the first half of 1901.

The largest country in one body and under one government is the Russian empire. It comprises 8,539,136 square miles.

Japan is the country where the cremation of corpses is practiced on the largest scale. The custom dates back about 1,200 years.

New Orleans insurance experts warn the people that the city may be burned down any time if the present careless methods of handling oil are tolerated.

The University of Tokio is to get the library of Prof. Max Muller. It contains 13,000 volumes and has been purchased by I Wasaki for presentation to the institution.

The Saxons, whose original settlement is determined by the little kingdom of Saxony, derived their name from the seax, or short, crooked knife with which they armed themselves.

The growth of the carpet industry in Philadelphia owes its origin to the enterprise of Peter Sprague, who manufactured the first carpet in the United States there in 1791.

Sweden has 27.70 inhabitants to the square mile, Denmark 147.60 and Belgium, the most densely settled country in the world except China, 533.50. The average of all Europe is 98 to the square mile.

The immigrants arriving in this country last year (448,572) were greater in numbers than since 1893 (502,917). Since 1896 the heaviest immigration has been 623,000, in 1892; the lightest, 229,000, in 1898.

Fans originated in the Western countries, and were first universally made of peacock, ostrich or parrot feathers. Three hundred years ago, we are told, the men used fans, and were not considered effeminate.

Clown was at first a tattooed person. In Britain and France the country people retained the habit of tattooing or of painting the faces in imitation of tattooing long after it had been abandoned in the cities.

Heliogabalus was the first Roman Emperor to wear a silken garment. In the year A. D. 220 he had a silken gown made in which he appeared in public, and which caused grave scandal among staid elderly Roman citizens.

Careful weighing, it is said, shows that an ordinary bee, not loaded, weighs the five-thousandth part of a pound. But the loaded bee, when it comes in fresh from the field and flowers, freighted with honey, often weighs nearly three times more.

A good sympathetic ink is made with the chloride of copper. Writing or drawing on paper with the ink is invisible at ordinary temperatures, but when the paper or parchment is heated the writing or drawing at once appears of a beautiful yellowish color.

Britain was known to the Phenicians as Barat-Auac, or "the land of tin," as far back as the year 1037 B. C. Some 500 years afterward the island was alluded to by the Romans under the name of Britannia, which subsequently became shortened to Britain.

The value of pepper was known of old. We read that when Rome had to be ransomed from its barbarian conqueror in the year 400 Alaric demanded 3,000 pounds of pepper among the payments, and that Hippocrates used it in medicine, applying it to the skin.

A hundred tons of cats' tails were recently sold in one lot in London for ornamenting ladies' wearing apparel. Assuming that an average cat's tail would weigh a couple of ounces this would mean that no fewer than 1,792,000 cats had been killed just to supply this one consignment.

The first patent medicine, it is asserted, ever put up for sale in America was a proposed cure for consumption. It was called "Tuscarora Rice," and was compounded and sold by a Mrs. Masters, who erected a large establishment for its manufacture in New Jersey about 1711.

The first gold pens made in this country were all manufactured by hand, the gold being cut from strips of the metal by scissors, and every subsequent operation being performed by hand. These hand-made gold pens cost from $5 to $20, and were far inferior to the machine-made article of the present day.

The knights of the days of chivalry were so well protected by their armor that they were practically invincible to all ordinary weapons. Even when dismounted they could not be injured save by the misericorde, a thin dagger, which penetrated the chains of the armor. In more than one battle knights fallen from their horses could not be killed until their armor had been broken up with axes and hammers.

The old tradition that the Eskimos are a people of small stature is without foundation. On the other hand, in Labrador, Buffinland and all around Hudson bay the height of the men is probably above rather than below the average of the human race, but as a rule the women, although very strong, are considerably shorter than the men. They are brave, industrious, provident and communicative, in all of which characteristics they contrast with the Northern tribes of Indians.

THE CLOTHES THEY WEAR

GOWNS WORN BY MEMBERS OF THE "FOUR HUNDRED" AT NEWPORT.

While It Is Yet Hot Weather Winter Cloak Models Appear—Fashions for Little Folks.

One of the prettiest gowns worn at the opening day of the tennis tournament at Newport was on Mrs. Hermann Oelrichs, says a correspondent of the New York Times. It was a lavender organdie, divided into small squares by raised bars of white. The skirt showed several horizontal insertions of pale yellow lace. The upper part of the skirt was plain and fitted closely. The bodice showed a bolero effect. The upper portion, or bolero, was of the organdie with vertical insertions of the lace. The lower edge of the short packet was edged by a band of lace, and the lower part of the corsage was formed of finely plaited white mull. The bishop sleeves had insertions of the lace at the wrist. Mrs. Oelrichs wore a medium-sized hat of pale blue tulle, which turned up abruptly on the left. A bow of lavender velvet nestled against the hair, and another bow of the same velvet was applied on the outside of the brim on the right side.

Mrs. George B. De Forest wore one of the most simple and charming frocks seen. It was an Irish grass linen, especially silky and sheer. The skirt had the front breadth tucked in fine tucks from the belt to the foot, and down each side ran a four-inch band of white embroidery done on the grass linen. Several of these bands ran around the bottom of the back and side breadths. The bodice had a yoke outlined with the embroidery, and the bishop sleeves puffed above the wristbands of embroidery. Mrs. De Forest's hat was a large ecru affair, bent well over the forehead and front and the coiffure, and was held in place by a filmy veil. It was trimmed with a variety of delicately tinted flowers and ribbons.

Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish, who was with Mrs. De Forest, wore a light yellow batiste beautifully embroidered all over in a deeper yellow. The frock was close fitting and very simply made. Her large cream colored straw hat had bows of pale blue satin ribbon and wreath of pink roses. She carried an exquisite parasol of rose pink silk, formed of three circular flounces on a plain foundation.

Mrs. Clarence Mackay was in a superb gown of heavy dead white lace over heavy silk. The skirt was long and trailing, and the lace Eton coat, stiffened with the silk, was worn over a chiffon blouse. Mrs. Mackay's hat was a large one, trimmed in white. She carried a plain parasol of pale blue silk with a five-inch border of pale yellow hemstitched to the blue.

Mrs. George Crocker wore a white organdie figured in a broken pattern of black with occasional hints of pink. The skirt was trimmed with vertical appliques of black lace, and the close-fitting bodice matched. A small hat of black touched with white completed the costume.

Mrs. James Laurens Van Alen was in a pale shade of blue mull. The skirt had a foot-deep flounce and a four-inch band of Russian lace just above the hem. Two or three inches above the straight insertion ran inch-wide insertions forming V points. The bodice had cream lace insertions in the yoke and fine scroll embroidery both back and front forming a yoke. The bishop sleeves had insertions of lace. Mrs. Van Alen's hat was a small one of white straw, simply trimmed with lace and with clusters of lilies of the valley at the left of the front.

Mrs. John Clinton Gray was in dull blue canvas cloth. The skirt was finished at the bottom in three clusters of three-quarter inch tucks, their own width apart. Above these a six-inch insertion of heavy blue lace of the same shade as the gown formed a heading. The skirt was plain otherwise. The sleeves fitted rather closely and were of the ordinary bishop cut. Mrs. Gray's hat was a narrow toque of blue straw, matching her gown in color. On either side of the front were placed small masses of black feathers.

Miss Daisy Pierson wore a white pique golf skirt, with white shoes, a white shirtwaist, and white sailor hat. Miss Chloise Hatch, daughter of W. Dennison Hatch, wore a white pique skirt, with white shoes, and a thin plain white blouse. Her broad-brimmed sailor hat of rough ecru straw had pale blue satin ribbon loops across the front of the brim, and a wreath of large, many-leaved, bluish-white flowers and carnation pinks almost concealed the front and sides of the brim. Miss Annie Lyman, who was with Miss Pierson, also wore a white cotton skirt and blouse, with a light-brown coat and a sailor hat.

Mrs. Herman Oelrichs was out driving in the rain one day in a simple frock of silky blue of a medium shade, with numerous quarter-inch dots in white scattered over it. The elbow sleeves had ruffles of the blue, with rows of white satin baby ribbon run in lines of two on the edge of each ruffle. A yoke was edged with the white-ribboned ruffle, and the stock was blue and white. A large blue hat trimmed with pale blue and white was worn. The skirt was simple, and had ruffles trimmed with the wee bands of satin ribbon.

Miss Cynthia Roche wore a short straight skirt of white pique. Like most of the wash skirts seen, it had no applied flounce, but the hip yoke, a foot deep, was formed of vertical half-inch tucks their own width apart. As these were left unstitched a foot below the waist they made the skirt quite full. The white blouse was not sheer and was absolutely plain. The hat form was a tricorne shape, the under rolling brim of bright red straw, the upper brim of a blended yellow and red. A big red chou was stuck between the front and the left points.

Miss Ellen Drexel Paul was in a sheer white muslin with horizontal insertions of delicate white lace. The narrow ruffles at the skirt's edge had these insertions, and the bodice had insertions in the yoke and bishop sleeves. Miss Paul's hat was a large one of pale blue, trimmed with two wide ostrich plumes of the same shade, which crossed in the front and dropped over the hair in the back.

With Miss Paul was Miss Gladys Brooks. The latter wore a simple cotton frock. The background, of a light cream color, was divided by waving lines of red an inch apart. In the center of these stripes, and at intervals of an inch, tiny sprigs of dull red appeared. The skirt fell in straight unbroken lines to the floor, where it swept the least bit. The six-inch hem was headed by a band of hemstitching. The waist showed a little of the hemstitching, but was plain, blousing the least bit in front. The sleeves were small bishop shape, puffing above the wristband. A large round white hat was worn.

At the Baby Parade.

New York Commercial Advertiser.

A study of the prizes to be awarded tomorrow to the successful contestants at the baby parade in Asbury Park gives an idea of some of the prettiest fashions in children's coats, since leading merchants of several cities have contributed of their choicest garments for children. A Newark firm sends a lovely child's coat in pale pink corded silk. The skirt is gathered full and confined at the waist in front with a crush band of the silk, terminating at either end with tiny mother of pearl buckles. The deep collar is bordered with a puffing of the same shade, and above that is an appliqued band of rose point. The sleeves have simple little pointed turned-back cuffs corded at the edge. At the neck the coat opens to disclose a guimpe composed of alternate rows of finely tucked silk and incrustations of the rose point. A little turned-over collar of tucked silk with touches of the lace completes the dainty garment. B. Altman & Co., of New York, contribute an outfit of coat, cap and slippers which are especially attractive. The coat is of rose pink pique. The skirt is pleated into a shallow yoke which is covered with a deep circular collar, bordered with a wide white embroidery and having insertion to match set on above it. A second collar is also edged with the embroidery and the tiny bishop sleeves have a band of the insertion and a frill of the edging. The cap is of the sheerest muslin and lace, and the little shoes are of heavy embroidery over pink satin with rosettes of pink satin ribbon. A coat of white chiffon over cream-colored taffeta is the dainty offering of another Newark house. Irish point lace insertion borders the coat and is inset in a second row continuing down both sides of the front and across the bottom. A bolero is outlined by the Irish point, and on the bishop sleeves are two rows of the lace in addition to the band at the wrist. A little turned-over collar is bordered by the insertion, completing a garment suitable for the dressiest occasions only.

Advance Models in Coats.

New York Tribune.

All indications are in the direction of two classes of coats for the coming season—those twenty-seven inches long and those forty-two inches. Some handsome models are of zibeline, with revers and collar of broadcloth in a lighter shade. Embroidery is added in several cases, and in others there is a cording or applique of faille or velvet. For formal wear velvet is said to be a certainty, as well as high-grade velveteens. As a rule coats of these last materials will be made long, with ample fullness in the skirts.

The long coat of former years has often failed to be becoming because of its attempt to cling closely to the figure, without due allowance for skirts, but the new style is half fitting, with a sudden flare at the waist line to allow for the curve of the hips.

The favored materials will be kersey, frieze, vicuna, broadcloth and silk. There are many varieties of the mode, including the double-breasted surtout, coachmen's coats, long directoires, and automobile styles, while for storm coats the Raglan and Newmarket, made of kersey or Irish frieze, will be the favorites.

The important feature of the autumn tailor-made costume is the return to the simpler lines of a few years ago. It has been so elaborated of late that it was hardly recognizable as the mode based on the severity of masculine fashions. Embroidery, applique, the thousand and one fanciful touches of last year, will be ignored by the tailored maid of 1901-02, who will tolerate nothing more frivolous than stitchings, straps and military braid. Corded fabrics are returning to favor for these costumes, displacing to some extent the smoothly finished cloths in vogue last year.

The fashions indicated thus far are not encouraging of the petite or the extremely slender young woman, but there is hope, even for her. Short box coats, blouses and Louis XV coats all have places in the list of modish garments, so every one may choose. A little woman is likely to be grotesque in a long or a "three-quarters" coat, and is pretty certain to be insignificant in a severe tailor-made costume. Her only chance lies in studying her individuality, and even accentuating it. The dainty and the essentially feminine are her distinctive characteristics, and if properly treated may give her a charm all her own, even if entirely unlike the more imposing impression made by the tall girl of ample proportion who can look stunning in severe simplicity.

The little woman must have a tailored gown, of course, but the tight-fitting coat that extends below the waist line is not for her. A jaunty reefer may suit her well, and she is to be pardoned if she refuses to let the Eton go. It was made for her by the guardian genius of little women.

Some of the sleeves in the new coats are novel in effect. Others are variations of the bishop and the directoire, with the so-called Paquin, which shows an undersleeve, still in the list. One long coat seen the other day had rather large sleeves, over which was a cape reaching to the elbow, cut in a scalloped effect at the armpit, and continued in another deep scallop to the revers.

The new silk waists are extremely pretty. Those made of satin crepe de chine are especially suited to the autumn months and are among the newest. Peau de soie also is seen in many handsome models.

Flannel waists for fall are as dainty as can be imagined and are strapped, stitched, gilt-buttoned and embroidered to a bewildering degree.

The dress skirt of taffeta or peau de soie is more popular than ever and more elaborate. Flounces, hemstitching, velvet appliques, cordings and tuckings appear in the plainer styles, while for reception and theater wear one finds lace trimmed, embroidered and even painted combinations.

LADYBUG HUNT.

Twenty Thousand Insects to Be Shipped to South Africa.

Philadelphia Record.

A rather remarkable contract has been entered into by F. C. Tobey, of West Stockbridge, Mass., to furnish 20,000 ladybugs to Professor Lounsbury, the British entomologist at South Africa, and all the little children in the vicinity of West Stockbridge are engaged in a ladybug hunt, which Mr. Tobey is glad to buy at rates which are quite tempting to the children.

Of all the myriad insects in the world this little reddish beetle is the most useful to man. Its value is beyond all price. It saves more crops the universe over, year after year, than any other agent. Its whole life is a warfare against other insects that destroy the farmer's substance.

It feeds entirely upon the eggs of other insects and upon the insects themselves if they are small enough to be swallowed by a specimen so diminutive as the ladybug itself.

The ladybug lays a string of tiny yellow eggs. She is cunning enough always to lay these amid a colony of plant lice. As soon as the larve hatch out, looking like miniature alligators, they begin to eat, and being carnivorous they fall upon the tiny insects around them. In the five or six weeks that they are growing up they destroy a whole plant-lice settlement. Then they roll up as cocoons and hang suspended head downward in nearly any available nook. They come out of the shell full grown ladybugs and keep on their carnivorous career. Curiously enough, the ladybug itself has few enemies.

The ladybug's greatest service, perhaps, is in the devouring of the deadly aphis, which is the work outlined in South Africa for her. These plant lice, little green insects no bigger than a tiny pinhead, are the most prolific of insects. They infest all plants and are particularly injurious to cotton crops. Too small and frail to eat the leaves, they suck out the juices.

But the ladybug pounces upon the plant lice. If it were not for this warfare scarcely any small crop or any flowers could be grown.

The Opium Fiend.

Philadelphia Record.

It is interesting to hear an opium smoker talk of his habit, a habit which, he always insists, is much less harmful and degrading than the habit of alcohol. One of these slaves of opium, or "dope," or "hop," as the drug is variously called, said, the other night: "I began to smoke three years ago. It was out of curiosity. I got very sick at first—I had to smoke five or six times before I began to enjoy it—but now it seems to me the pleasantest, the very pleasantest thing in life. To lie on the mattress with three or four good friends, to talk dreamily, and to watch the attendant cooking the pills over the flame of the peanut oil lamp—then to take the pipe and inhale deep into the lungs the tranquilizing smoke until one seems to float away—well, there is no happiness like that. You buy your opium in Chinatown, it comes in cans that cost $6.50 apiece, but most of us buy it in smaller quantities than that, and the dealer puts it up then in a quaintly folded playing card. It resembles New Orleans molasses, and, if you are a fairly heavy smoker, you will use 50 cents' worth of it in a night. I know a girl who has smoked a dollar's worth a night for the last three years. She is healthy and doesn't look a day older than her twenty years. The opium smoker never drinks. He eats very little meat. A great deal of coffee, a great deal of fresh fruit and many cigarettes—that is the fare which he likes best."